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ABSTRACT

The 286 students who graduated from Cumberland Community College (CCC) in 1975 were surveyed regarding their educational objectives, educational/occupational status, satisfaction with CCC, method of finding a job, earning potential, relatedness of job to major, and transfer problems and success. Of the 138 (48%) graduates who completed the questionnaire, 52 (38%) enrolled primarily "to prepare for future employment." Of this group, 46 were currently employed either full- or part-time. About 32% enrolled "to prepare for further education at a four-year college." Of these students, 38 transferred and 28 had received baccalaureate degrees (BA's). Job information was provided by 117 graduates, 73% of whom were employed full-time and 12% employed part-time. Few respondents found their job through CCC; however, 66% felt their college program positively affected their earning potential. About 75% were satisfied with their job. After receiving their associate degrees, 87 graduates subsequently transferred to four-year colleges. Most (70%) had no problems transferring credits, 66.6% felt they had been well-prepared for transfer, and 56 had already received their BA's. Half of the transfers were initially enrolled at CCC in career-preparation courses. Of these, 13 had not originally intended to transfer. (MB)

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FOLLOW-UP STUDIES OF 1975 CCC GRADUATES

INFORMATION SHEETS 79-01, 79-02, AND 79-03

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Cumberland County College
Vineland, N.J.

Cumberland County College

Information Sheet 79-01
Follow-Up Study of 1975 CCC Graduates
Current Status and College Evaluation

Source of Information

During the 1978 fall semester one of a series of current follow-up surveys of CCC graduates was initiated. For this project the names of all 1975 graduates as well as their majors were pulled from student records. The questionnaire, based on survey forms used at Mercer County College and Northern Virginia Community College, was mailed with a covering letter and return envelope to 286 graduates. Two additional mailings were sent to graduates who had not returned questionnaires by December 20.

In addition to the questionnaire sent to all graduates, one-page supplemental forms were designed for graduates in business, legal technology, nursing, and physical education/recreation.

A total of 73 of the 286 graduates did not respond to the survey and 74 forms were returned by the Post Office, so the results given below are based on 138 responses or 48.2 percent. Differences between graduates who returned questionnaires and those who didn't were not determined for this survey; consequently the results given below are representative only of those 138 graduates who responded to the survey.

Entering Education Objectives

Based on a total of 138 questionnaires processed, 52 or 37.7 percent of the graduates said their primary reason for enrolling was "To prepare for future employment." Among those with this objective, 46 are currently employed, either full-time or part-time. None of the 52 with this objective is currently unemployed and seeking a job.

Nine of the CCC graduates responding indicated they originally enrolled "To improve skills for a job held at the time of enrollment." As might be expected, all of these graduates are currently employed full-time at jobs they held before entering the college. Most are employed in the area of Law Enforcement, the field in which they received their degrees.

A total of 44 or 31.9 percent of the graduates responding stated as their entering objective: "To prepare for further education at a four-year college." Nearly all of these graduates, 38 of 44 or 86.4 percent, did transfer to four-year colleges and 28 have received baccalaureate degrees.

Other reasons or combinations of reasons for originally enrolling were cited by a total of 17 respondents or 12.3 percent. "To satisfy a personal interest" was a reason given by 16 or 11.6 percent of the graduates. None of the graduates responding indicated they originally enrolled because an employer required additional training. Results are shown on page two.

Although asking graduates to report their original reasons for enrolling is not as satisfactory as asking entering students the same question, data about the current status of graduates is more meaningful when information about their original intentions is available. This fall, for example, entering students were asked their reasons for attending (see Information Sheet 78-02) and this information will be used in subsequent follow-up studies of this group.

ORIGINAL REASON FOR ENROLLING	NUMBER	PERCENT
To prepare for future employment	52	37.7%
To improve skills for a job held at the time of enrollment	9	6.5%
To prepare for further education at a four-year college	44	31.9%
To satisfy requirement of an employer in order to continue job held at the time of enrollment	--	-----
To satisfy a personal interest	16	11.6%
Other reason (or combination of reasons)	17	12.3%
	138	100.0%

Current Educational/Occupational Status

Results of the item on current status are given below for the graduates who returned questionnaires. Respondents could select more than one category.

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL/OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	NUMBER	PERCENT
EMPLOYED	101	73.2%
STUDENT	8	5.8%
HOMEMAKER	3	2.2%
EMPLOYED/STUDENT	20	14.4%
UNEMPLOYED		
seeking employment	3	2.2%
not seeking employment	3	2.2%
	138	100.0%

A partial list of job titles and employers for graduates working full-time, as well as a list of four-year institutions from which a total of 58 (41.7%) 1975 graduates have received degrees, is attached.

Graduates' Evaluations of CCC

Part three of the questionnaire requested graduates to evaluate selected programs and services at Cumberland County College on a five point range from very satisfied to very dissatisfied with an additional choice of "no basis for opinion." Items used in this section of the survey form may be revised for subsequent studies, since some items included are not as relevant to CCC as are other possible items. For example "Cultural Programs;" here, it's difficult to tell whether students indicating dissatisfaction are saying they would have liked more programs or whether they disliked the programs offered. Also, the lower number of students indicating satisfaction with job placement services is misleading because a majority of respondents said they had "no basis for an opinion" regarding this service. Regarding responses to Financial Aid Services, graduates were undoubtedly rating this service on the basis of whether or not they received financial aid and not on the basis of the overall service or program.

Table 2 contains the same information as Table 1 but data are grouped by category. Both Tables should be interpreted with care due to the differences in response described above.

TABLE 1

Satisfaction with College Services

College Programs and Services	Combined Ratings of Very Satisfied and Satisfied		Uncertain		Combined Ratings of Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied		No Basis for Opinion or No Response		TOTALS
Admission Procedures	116	84.0%	11	8.0%	7	5.1%	4	2.9%	138
Overall Quality of Instruction	119	86.2	11	8.0	5	3.6	3	2.2	138
Faculty Interest and Availability	117	84.8	12	8.7	4	2.9	5	3.6	138
Course Content	112	81.2	13	9.4	9	6.5	4	2.9	138
Grading and Testing	115	83.3	13	9.4	9	6.5	1	0.7	138
Academic Advisement	85	61.6	16	11.6	25	18.1	12	8.7	138
Personal Counseling	76	55.1	16	11.6	21	15.2	25	18.1	138
Job Placement Assistance	15	10.9	30	21.7	18	13.0	75	54.3	138
Financial Aid Services	34	24.6	18	13.0	16	11.6	70	50.7	138
Recreational Facilities and Equipment	87	63.0	9	6.5	9	6.5	33	23.9	138
Cultural Programs	64	46.4	32	23.2	11	8.0	31	22.4	138
Student Activities and Organizations	80	58.0	18	13.0	15	10.9	25	18.1	138
Vocational/Career Advisement	50	36.2	26	18.8	16	11.6	46	33.3	138
Library Facilities and Equipment	123	89.1	4	3.0	6	4.3	5	3.6	138

TABLE 2

Combined Ratings of College Services*

Service Area	Satisfied and Very Satisfied	Uncertain	Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied	No Basis for Opinion or Response
Admissions/Advisement				
Admissions Procedures Academic Advisement	72.8%	9.8%	11.6%	5.8%
General Student Services				
Job Placement Assistance Vocational/Career Advisement Personal Counseling Financial Aid Services	31.7	16.3	12.9	39.1
Educational Environment				
Overall Quality of Instruction Faculty Interest and Availability Library Facilities and Equipment	86.7	6.5	3.6	3.1
Program/Curriculum				
Course Content Grading and Testing	82.2	9.4	6.5	1.8
Activities/Facilities				
Cultural Programs Recreational Facilities and Equipment Student Activities and Organizations	55.8	14.2	8.4	21.5

*Percentages may not total 100.0% for each line due to rounding

Selected Comments

About half of the graduates returning questionnaires commented in response to the following item: "In your own words, how could the services and programs at Cumberland County College be improved to better serve future students?" A selection of these comments is given below as they appeared on forms with editing as needed.

General Comments

Approximately 17 graduates made such general comments as those given below:

> My experience was extremely positive.
>
> Considering cost/benefit limitations imposed on community colleges, services and programs are more than adequate.
>
> It would be nice if CCC could be a four-year college.

Curriculum and Instruction

Twenty comments grouped in this category included comments concerning improved transfer information; more courses or programs in such areas as advertising, journalism, arts, allied health; and a stronger emphasis on education/work relationships. Examples are:

> (Offer) more "on-the-job" courses.
>
> Offer a seminar for students who plan to go to a four-year college.
>
> Upgrade academic standards.
>
> Expand career programs.
>
> Have instructors available when they are needed.

Scheduling and Registration

Nine comments in this area are represented by the following examples:

> (Provide) academic advisement before admission regarding job opportunities, financial aid and work study.
>
> (College) could have offered several once-a-week 2½ hour courses in the evening.

Community Outreach

Three graduates commented about the areas described below:

> More publicity of all services and programs.
>
> ...make a stronger effort (to recruit) local high school students.
>
> The college and the community have a need to know more about each other.

Student Services and Programs

Comments from 17 graduates were grouped into this category, including remarks on day care, job placement, counseling, financial aid.

> (Provide) day care (that) could be co-oped with parents.
>
> (Provide) more opportunity to see what types of jobs exist in the community.
>
> Establish a better scholarship program and funding.
>
> The only improvement...would be for the college to get the students more involved with college affairs.

Summary

Additional information from this follow-up study, including a summary of data available about job satisfaction, salary levels, relatedness of job to major and transfer success, will be tabulated and distributed in future information sheets. Data obtained from the supplemental survey forms as well as information about specific curricula will be analyzed for departmental use.

These preliminary results of the survey provide an indication of how graduates view their experiences at CCC, as well as information about how well the graduates are succeeding in terms of continued education or employment.

Attachment 1

Institutions from which 1975 Graduates Have Received Baccalaureate Degrees.

Arkansas Tech University - (1)

Glassboro State College - (30)

Gordon College (MA) - (1)

Montclair State College - (1)

Mount Saint Mary's College (MD) - (1)

Penn State University - (1)

Roger Williams College (RI) - (1)

Rutgers, The State University - (4)

Southhampton College (NY) - (1)

Stetson University (FL) - (1)

Stockton State College - (5)

Trenton State College - (3)

University of Delaware - (1)

University of Virginia - (1)

Vassar College (NY) - (1)

Villanova University - (1)

York College (PA) - (2)

Attachment 2

Selected List of Area Employers of 1975 Graduates

Merchandising Executive
Abraham & Strauss

Coordinator of Training Program
AIMS Training School

Engine Technician
Air Work Corporation

Customer Service Representative
Allegheny Airlines

Typist/Receptionist
Bellco Glass, Inc.

Teacher
Bridgeton Board of Education

Charge Nurse
Bridgeton Hospital Association

Teacher
Buena School

Police Detective
Borough of Wildwood Crest

Patrolman
City of Vineland

Recreational Assistant
Cumberland County Guidance Center

Supervisor
Cumberland County Juvenile Detention Center

Occupational Health Nurse
DuPont Chambers Works

Accountant
Farmers Mutual Life

Secretary
Glass Machine, Inc.

Sales Representative
Metropolitan Life Insurance

Instructional Aide
North Delsea Day Care

Customer Sales Representative
New Jersey Bell

Lab Technician/Assistant Researcher
Rutgers University-Research and Development Center

Penal Counselor
Salem City Jail

Letter Carrier
U.S. Postal Service

Mechanical Technician
Wheaton Glass Company

Cumberland County College

Information Sheet 79-02
Follow Up Study of 1975 Graduates
Success in the Job Market

Source of Information

This summary of job market information for CCC graduates is a continuation of report 79-01 and is based on responses received from 138 out of 286 1975 college graduates. A copy of the section of the questionnaire from which this information is taken is attached.

Finding a Job

Using the total of 138 responding graduates 117 provided job information indicating that 73.2% are currently employed on a full-time basis and another 16 (11.6) are employed part-time or on a temporary basis. Data given in this summary are based on the graduates who are employed full-time.

One item asked graduates how they found their current job. As might be expected, about two-thirds found their jobs on their own; one in ten was already working in their current job while attending CCC; about one-fifth used other means such as employment agencies, personal contact, four-year college placement offices, CETA, union membership, etc.

Results for this item indicate that few of the 1975 graduates found their current jobs through Cumberland County College. This is not surprising, however, since a majority of the currently employed students transferred to a four-year college first or found their jobs through the traditional methods.

Earning Potential

Compiling information about average salaries of graduates is subject to a number of variables: length of employment, relatedness of job to major field, age, and sex to name a few. Data discussed here are based only on responses to the current survey for the following item:

> If you are employed full-time indicate the approximate average monthly wages received in your current job before taxes and deductions.

The choice of wage ranges varied from under $300 to $1,200 and up, as shown below. Figures given are for graduates who began working for their current employer after graduating from the college. It should be noted also that wages reported by the responding graduates are for their current jobs and are not starting salaries for jobs obtained immediately after graduating.

Number of Responding 1975 Graduates Working Full-Time by Gross Monthly Wages

Up to $300	1	$700 - 799	11
$300 - 399	2	$800 - 899	7
$400 - 499	5	$900 - 999	7
$500 - 599	6	$1,000 - 1,099	11
$600 - 699	8	$1,100 - 1,199	5
		$1,200 and up	6
			69

Data were not tabulated for separate employment areas or majors because of the small population of respondents by major. Since comparable data are not now available, the only correct analysis of this information is: for 1975 CCC graduates who returned survey forms, are currently employed full-time, and began their current employment after graduation, slightly over half are currently earning average monthly salaries before taxes of $800.00 or more. The data include all graduates, not just those working in a field related to their program here.

Because these dollar figures may be misleading a more relevant question concerns the way graduates feel in general about how their earning potential has been affected by their CCC program.

As shown below, about two-thirds of all 1975 graduates who are employed full-time feel that taking their CCC program has positively affected their earning potential. In analyzing the results obtained from this item on the survey form, it is useful to compare data with another item which asked the graduates to describe the relationship between their jobs and their programs of study.

Earning Potential and Job Relatedness
for 1975 Graduates Who are Employed Full-Time
N=101

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB & MAJOR	WAS YOUR EARNING POTENTIAL AFFECTED BY YOUR PROGRAM AT CCC ?			
	Yes	No	No Response	Total
Directly Related	38	10		48
Somewhat Related	21	4		25
Not At All Related	9	18		27
No Response			1	1
TOTAL	68	32	1	101
	67.3%	31.7%	1.0%	

A similar item asked graduates to indicate how satisfied they were with the contribution CCC has made to their current job. Again using the job-relationship item, the results shown below indicate that nearly three-fourths of the full-time employed graduates responding were satisfied or very satisfied. Graduates in jobs directly related to their programs reported a higher level of satisfaction with the college's contribution than graduates in jobs that are not at all related to their college program.

Satisfaction with CCC and Job-Relatedness
for 1975 Graduates Who Are Employed Full-Time
N=101

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH CCC

Relatedness of Job to Major	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Uncertain or No Response	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Total
Directly Related	43	4	1	48
Somewhat Related	23	2		25
Not at All Related	9	15	3	27
No Response		1		1
Total	75 74.2%	22 21.8%	4 4.0%	101

Job Satisfaction

According to responses received from the 1975 graduates who are employed full-time, 75 percent are satisfied or very satisfied with their current jobs. The level of job satisfaction appears to be affected by the relationship between job and major, as shown below:

1975 Graduates' Job Satisfaction
and Relationship of Job to Major

JOB SATISFACTION

Relatedness of Job to Major	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Uncertain or No Response	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Total
Directly Related	42	2	4	48
Somewhat Related	19	4	2	25
Not at All Related	15	7	6	27
No Response				1
Total	76 75.2%	13 12.9%	12 11.9%	101

Relatedness of Career and Curriculum

As described in previous tables, slightly over one-quarter of the 1975 graduates who returned surveys and who are working full-time reported that their current jobs are not at all related to their CCC programs of study. Still, over half of these graduates in unrelated jobs report that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their current employment. The graduates working in unrelated fields were asked why they left the field in which they majored. Results for this item are given below:

If your current position is unrelated to your program at CCC, for what reason did you leave this career area?

Reasons other than those given	10
Was no longer interested in that career area	9
Was unable to find employment	6
Did not like employment conditions in that career area	3
Did not feel my preparation at CCC was adequate for that career area	2
No response	2
	32*

*Responses given total 32 rather than 27 because some graduates checked more than one item.

Most of the graduates working in unrelated jobs indicated their reasons for changing fields were different from those listed. These graduates indicated that they intended to continue their career preparation at a four-year college. Two graduates said they had not intended to prepare for employment but took courses for personal enrichment or for the social experience of attending college.

Summary and Comments

One of the major goals of the college is to prepare its students for job entry. Results from this follow-up study of graduates indicate that over 75 percent of the students who received degrees in 1975 are employed, most of them full-time. In addition, the data indicate that nearly half of the graduates working full-time are employed in fields directly related to their majors at the college; another 25 percent of these graduates are in somewhat related fields.

Of some concern is the information that slightly over one-quarter of the graduates employed full-time are working in areas that are not related to their majors. Relatively few of these former students are in unrelated fields because they could not find employment, however.

Both job satisfaction and satisfaction with the contribution of their college program to their job are rated highly by a large majority of employed graduates.

Another section of the survey form describing transfer success will be summarized in the next report.

Cumberland County College

Information Sheet 79-03
Summary of Information About
1975 CCC Graduates Who Transferred
to Four-Year Institutions

Source of Information

This Information Sheet is the final summary of data from the survey of 1975 graduates. Part five of the attached survey form requested graduates who transferred to provide information on their experience.

It should be emphasized again that the results reported here are based only on completed questionnaires from approximately half of the 1975 graduates.

Transfer Status

Almost two out of three (62.6%) or 87 graduates subsequently transferred to four-year colleges after receiving their associate degrees.

At this time, nearly 60 of these graduates who transferred have received baccalaureate degrees. A list of institutions from which these students received degrees was attached to Information Sheet 79-01. Another 18 CCC graduates are currently attending four-year institutions either full or part-time. The remaining transfers have either discontinued their education or did not respond to the item on their current status at a four-year institution.

Preparation for Transfer

Using approximately 87 responses from graduates who transferred, the following can be said about their experiences at the transfer institutions.

If you transferred, did you have any problems in transferring to the four-year institution? (N=87)

Yes		No		No Response	
N	%	N	%	N	%
10	11.5	75	86.2	2	0.3

Did you lose any credit hours (in course(s) with grade(s) of C or better) when you transferred?

Yes		No		No Response	
N	%	N	%	N	%
23	26.4	61	70.1	3	3.4

The median number of credit hours reported lost was six; two transfer students reported losing forty and fifty credit hours, but both were in career-related programs at CCC and transferred to out-of-state institutions.

For students who transferred to a four-year college in order to continue their preparation for a career field begun at CCC, an important question concerns how well they were prepared at the two-year college for the four-year program. The item and the responses appear below:

To What Extent Did Your Program at CCC Prepare You for the Curriculum in Which You Are Currently Enrolled? N=87

Well or Very Well		Uncertain		Poorly or Very Poorly		Enrolled in An Unrelated Curriculum		No Response	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
58	66.6	7	8.1	5	5.8	9	10.3	8	9.2

Although only nine graduates indicated they had transferred into areas unrelated to their CCC program, a total of 25 responded to the next item, as indicated below:

If your further education is unrelated to your program at CCC, for what reason did you leave that program area?

(3) CCC preparation was not adequate for further study in that program area

(8) Was no longer interested in that program area

(2) Was unable to find a program of further education in my program area

(6) Employment prospects in my CCC program area were not adequate

(9) Other

Some of the graduates who transferred selected more than one response, but the majority indicated their change of program was due to a change of interest or for other reasons such as specialization in a career field after general preparation at CCC or a change in career focus, e.g., from handicapped assistant to music therapy.

Summary

The findings from this portion of the follow-up study seem to corroborate other data showing that the proportion of Cumberland County College graduates who subsequently attend four-year institutions is about sixty percent or slightly higher. One question that might be asked is whether the graduates who transferred were originally enrolled in transfer program and whether they intended to transfer when they entered the two-year program. Half (43 out of 87) the graduates who transferred were enrolled at CCC in what are thought of as career-preparation fields--Legal Technology, Nursing, Law Enforcement, Horticulture, Accounting, Industrial Technology. Out of these 43 graduates, 13 or about one of three, did not originally intend to transfer. Reasons for changing objectives were not captured on this questionnaire but might be explored in

additional follow-up studies.

Basing an interpretation only on the 87 graduates who ultimately transferred, it can be said that a large majority had no transfer problems, lost relatively few credits, and felt their CCC program had prepared them well or very well for further education.

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